-- REMARKS --

Claims 1-7 and 23-34 are pending in the present application. Claims 8 - 22 have been withdrawn. Claims 1 - 7 remain under consideration. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to correct inadvertent typographical errors. Claim 1 has been amended and claims 23 - 34 added to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the Applicant's invention. No new matter has been added with the amendment of claims 1 and 3 or the addition of new claims 23 to 34.

A. Election/Restriction

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

I. Claims 1 - 7, drawn to a self-joining polymer composition, classified in class 523, subclass 200 and 201.

II. Claims 8 - 9 and 10 - 15, drawn to a method of using a self-joining polymer composition for healing a failure in a composite member, classified in class 523, subclass 200 and class 428, subclass 402.2.

III. claims 16 - 18 and 19 - 22, drawn to an electronic package composition, classified in class 428, subclass 620.

2. Inventions of Group I and Group II are related as product and process of user.

3. Inventions of Group I and Group III are related as mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship.

4. Inventions of Group II and Group III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes is proper.

6. During a telephone conversation with Frank Nicholas on May 14, 2004 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1 - 7.

The election of Group I, claims 1 - 7 is confirmed. Claims 8 - 22 are withdrawn from further consideration as being drawn to a non-elected invention. No change of inventorship is required by the withdrawal of claims 8 - 22.

B. Claims 1 - 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over White et al. U.S. Patent 6,518,330 or Guilbert et al. U.S. Patent 6,075,072, each in view of Arfaei U.S. Patent 4,960,465 or Aharoni U.S. Patent 5,326,830.

The rejection of claims 1 - 7 under 103(a) is traversed. For this rejection to stand each and every element of claims 1 - 7 must be taught or suggested in at least as great detail as contained in the art. Furthermore, there must be some suggestion *in the art itself*, to combine the references to arrive at the claimed invention. Because the art, alone and in combination fails to teach or suggest 1) a self-joining polymer composition including "amine pendant groups attached to the polymer" and 2) "cross-linking with the reactable pendant groups..." as claimed in independent claim 1, the rejection cannot stand.

White does not teach a self-joining polymer composition including amine pendant groups attached to the polymer and cross-linking with the reactable pendant groups. Furthermore, White teaches away from Applicants invention. White requires a catalyst and states that the amine groups fail to retain sufficient activity. Specifically, White teaches that "... repair mechanism uses naturally occurring functional sites in a polyester matrix network to trigger a repair action...was specifically investigated in the case of...embedded amine groups and it was found that the amine groups did not retain sufficient activity and was determined to be not feasible." (See White col. 1 lines 40- 47; col. 2 lines 62-65; and col. 3 lines 13-15)

Additionally, White fails to teach or suggest the use of graft co-polymers, White merely mentions that "...other components may be added to the polymer, such as, fibers, filler, adhesion modifiers, blowing agents, antioxidants, colorant and dyes, and fragrances." (See White col. 5 lines 54 – 56)

Furthermore, White lacks the suggestion and motivation to combine with either Aharoni or Arfaei to teach the invention as claimed by the Applicants in independent claim 1 or dependent claims 2 to 7. Neither Aharoni nor Arfaei teach or suggest a self-joining polymer composition including amine pendant groups attached to the polymer and cross-linking with the reactable pendant groups.

Turning to Guilbert, Guilbert fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a flowable polymerizable material, or an equivalent, as claimed in independent claim 1. Guilbert only suggests "a 'film forming component' to coat and seal," not to join as claimed by the Applicants. (See Guilbert col. 4 lines 6 –9) Guilbert only teaches a corrosive protective coating that is useful in providing "coating repair components...in a surface layer, less than 200 micrometers thick". (See Guilbert col. 3 lines 53 – 55)

Furthermore, Guilbert lacks the suggestion and motivation to combine with either Aharoni or Arfaei to teach the invention as claimed by the Applicants in independent claim 1 or dependent claims 2 to 7. Neither Aharoni nor Arfaei teach or suggest a flowable polymerizable material, or an equivalent.

In addition, Guilbert is not reasonably pertinent to the particular problem with which the present invention is concerned as required by MPEP 2141.01(a) since Guilbert concerns "protective layers of the invention...applied to selected surfaces using several processes...material is dipped into a fluid bed of the coating composition or exposed to a coating spray." (See Guilbert col. 5 lines 61 – 66 and col. 6 line 1) Coating of selective surfaces is non-analogous to "manufacturing articles from the described materials," as taught in the present invention. Therefore, Guilbert should not be relied on as a reference under 35 U.S.C. 103.

For these reasons, the withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is requested. Claims 2 - 7 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and, therefore, contain each and every element of independent claim 1. Therefore, the prior art, alone and in combination, fails to teach or suggest each and every element of claims 2 - 7 for at least the reasons given above for claim 1. Furthermore, where an independent claim is nonobvious, any claim depending therefrom is also non-obvious. See MPEP 2143.03 and In Re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (where an independent claim is non-obvious, any claims depending therefrom are also non-obvious.).

Withdrawal of the rejections to claims 1 - 7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is requested.

C. New claims 23 to 34 are patentable over the cited art.

New claims 23 to 34 are patentable over the cited art alone or in combination for at least the same reasons as stated above for claims 1 to 7. Specifically, Claims 23 to 31 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and are, therefore, patentable over White et al. U.S. Patent 6,518,330 or Guilbert et al. U.S. Patent 6,075,072, each in view of Arfaei U.S. Patent 4,960,465 or Aharoni U.S. Patent 5,326,830 for at least the same reasons as stated above for independent claim 1.

CONCLUSION

The Examiner's rejections have been obviated by the above remarks and amendments. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 - 7 and claims 23 - 34 fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103, and 112. In view of the foregoing remarks, favorable consideration and passage to issue of the present application are respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,
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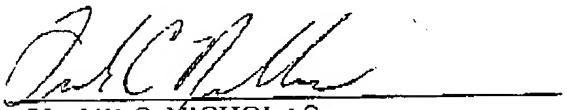

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